

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 VALLET 00478 071423Z  
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-05 INR-10 L-03 ACDA-12  
NSAE-00 PA-01 SS-15 SP-02 USIA-06 TRSE-00 DODE-00  
/067 W

-----004879 071425Z /43

P 071414Z MAR 78  
FM AMEMBASSY VALLETTA  
TO USMISSION USNATO PRIORITY  
INFO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8026

C O N F I D E N T I A L VALLETTA 00478

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: AFSP, NATO  
SUBJECT: MALTESE PARLIAMENTARIAN REQUESTS CALL ON  
AMBASSADOR BENNETT

REF: USNATO 02264

1. FELICE IS PROBABLY SPEAKING MORE FOR HIMSELF THAN HE  
IS SPEAKING FOR MINTOFF. IF AMBASSADOR'S SCHEDULE PERMITS  
WE THINK HE SHOULD GO AHEAD AND RECEIVE HIM BUT BECAUSE  
FELICE IS A SELF-PROMOTER, HE SHOULD BE HANDLED A BIT  
GINGERLY.

2. DR. MARIO FELICE IS A NATIONALIST MP OF LONG STANDING  
AND PRESENTLY SHADOW FINANCE MINISTER. HE IS SOMETHING OF  
A LONE WOLF IN NATIONALIST PARTY CIRCLES AND A BIT MIFFED  
AT NOT BEING TAPPED FOR A TOP POSITION IN LAST YEAR'S  
LEADERSHIP CHANGES IN THE NATIONALIST PARTY. HIS REAL  
INTEREST PROBABLY IS FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND IN THE PAST HAS  
BEEN A STRONG LOCAL ADVOCATE OF NATO AND HAS BEEN IN THE  
FOREFRONT OF THOSE PUSHING THE IDEA OF A SECURITY LINK OF  
SOME KIND FOR MALTA WITH NATO. HOWEVER HE HAS BEEN FAIRLY  
QUIET ON THE SUBJECT OVER THE PAST YEAR AND SOME MONTHS  
BACK WAS QUOTED PUBLICLY AS FAVORING EQUAL ACCESS BY BOTH  
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US AND SOVIET NAVAL CRAFT TO GRAND HARBOR. TO WHAT EXTENT  
THIS REPRESENTS SOME SHIFT IN APPROACH WE DON'T KNOW.  
WE HAVE NO REASON TO DOUBT THAT HE REMAINS STRONGLY  
FRIENDLY TO THE US AND THE WEST IN GENERAL.

3. ABOUT A YEAR AGO HE SOUGHT AND HAD A MEETING WITH THE  
AMBASSADOR HERE, ALLEGEDLY TO CONVEY A "MESSAGE" FROM

MINTOFF THAT HE WAS ANXIOUS TO IMPROVE HIS RELATIONSHIP WITH THE US AND MIGHT EVEN BE PREPARED TO ACCEPT SIXTH FLEET VISITS IN RETURN FOR SUBSTANTIAL US ECONOMIC AID. SUBSEQUENT EVENTS HAVE NOT SUPPORTED THE MESSAGE IF INDEED THERE WAS ONE. WE DON'T KNOW WHAT MESSAGE FELICE NOW CLAIMS TO CARRY, WHETHER IT IS SOMETHING SPECIFIC FROM MINTOFF OR, MORE LIKELY, SOMETHING THAT FELICE WANTS TO SAY BASED ON WHATEVER CONVERSATION HE HAS HAD WITH MINTOFF. BUT WE WOULD BE INTERESTED TO KNOW WHAT IT IS. WE ALSO WANT TO KEEP UP AS MUCH DIALOGUE AS POSSIBLE, INCLUDING CONTACTS WITH THE NATIONALISTS WHO RIGHTLY CLAIM ON THE BASIS OF THE 1976 ELECTIONS (49 PCT) TO REPRESENT SOMETHING LIKE HALF OF THE OPINION OF THE MALTESE AND WHO FEEL THAT THE WEST TENDS TO IGNORE THAT PARTY HERE THAT IS AVOWEDLY PRO-WEST.

4. SO WE RECOMMEND HE BE RECEIVED IN BRUSSELS, EITHER BY THE AMBASSADOR IF HIS SCHEDULE PERMITS OR BY DEP PERMREP GLITMAN AS AN ALTERNATIVE. LAINGEN

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## Message Attributes

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**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** n/a  
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**Decaption Date:** 01 jan 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
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**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
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**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 20 Mar 2014  
**Disposition Event:**  
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**Disposition Reason:**  
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**Expiration:**  
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**Subject:** MALTESE PARLIAMENTARIAN REQUESTS CALL ON AMBASSADOR BENNETT  
**TAGS:** AFSP, NATO  
**To:** USNATO  
**Type:** TE  
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